

In The Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (cancelled);

Claim 2 (cancelled);

Claim 3 (cancelled);

Claim 4 (cancelled);

Claim 5 (cancelled);

Claim 6 (cancelled);

Claim 7 (cancelled);

Claim 8 (cancelled);

Claim 9 (cancelled);

Claim 10 (cancelled);

Claim 11 (cancelled);

Claim 12 (currently amended): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, the railing tubular member having a central axis and a generally rectangular cross-section, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having a central axis and a generally rectangular cross-section and at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

(a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally flat, generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite

front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;

(b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate being generally flat, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;

(c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right ridges being parallel to the central axis, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, the left plate inner surface, the right plate inner surface, the transverse plate, and the left and right ridges defining a generally rectangular cross-sectional cavity for allowing the bimini bracket to slide in an axial direction along ~~slidingly engage~~ the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges, while preventing the bimini bracket from rotating about the central axis;

(d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, for allowing the tubular member to be clamped between the left and right side plates when the hand knob is hand tightened, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and for allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member when the hand knob is hand loosened;

- (e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket; and
- (f) a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The bimini bracket of claim 12, further comprising a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The bimini bracket of claim 13, wherein the left and right side plates taper upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The bimini bracket of claim 14, further comprising a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.

Claim 16 (previously presented): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a

top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

- (a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;
- (b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;
- (c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right side plates tapering upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, for allowing the bimini bracket to slidingly engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges;
- (d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, for allowing the tubular member to be clamped between the left and right side plates when the hand knob is hand tightened, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and

for allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member when the hand knob is hand loosened;

- (e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket;
- (f) a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first hexagonal recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob;
- (g) a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second hexagonal recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut; and
- (h) a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.